

September 23, 2013 E-Newsletter

Strengthen Social Security Act H.R. 3118



On Tuesday, September 17, 2013, Congresswoman Linda Sanchez introduced the Strengthen Social Security Act H.R. 3118 that would increase Social Security benefits by an average of \$800 annually and lift the cap on wages. This is a companion bill to S. 567 introduced by Senator Tom Harkin this spring that you have been advocating on for the last several months. As you know, some members of Congress continue to push for cuts to Social Security under the guise of deficit reduction. The introduction of this bill allows us to push back on that narrative and talk about the need to strengthen and expand Social Security. We need your help right now to do it and help get as many co-sponsors as possible of H.R. 3118

Strengthen Social Security Act H.R. 3118

If signed into law, the *Strengthening Social Security Act* would amend title II of the Social Security Act to adjust the benefit formula, resulting in a more generous monthly Social Security benefit. It would also change the way that cost-of-living adjustments are calculated by adopting a Consumer Price Index for the Elderly, and it would lift the cap on income subject to the payroll tax.

Reps. Linda Sanchez (CA-38) and Rush Holt (NJ-12) introduced H.R. 3118 on September 17, 2013. It has since been referred to the Committee on Ways and Means, and to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

Congressmen Jim Langevin & David N. Cicilline have again shown their support for Rhode Island seniors by signing on as Co-Sponsors to this legislation. Thank You!!!

HOUSE PASSES GOP PLAN TO SLASH FOOD STAMP FUNDING

Ed O'Keefe and Niraj Chokshi, Washington Post



The House narrowly approved a far-reaching overhaul of the nation's food-stamp program Thursday that would slash food aid to about 4 million Americans over the next few years and shift a greater burden of taking care of the poor to state governments...[Read More](#)

Congressmen Langevin & Cicilline did not support this action.



18 PERCENT OF AMERICANS EXPECT DEATH TO BE THEIR RETIREMENT: STUDY

The Huffington Post



According to a recent survey by HSBC, 18 percent of Americans say they'll never be able to retire. That figure is higher than the 12 percent of people worldwide who don't ever expect to retire, the survey of 16,000 people found...[Read More](#)

Tax Fairness Coalition Praises Introduction of Sen. Levin's Legislation to Stop Abuse of Corporate Tax Havens

WASHINGTON – Americans for Tax Fairness (ATF), a coalition of more than 325 national and state organizations, today praised the introduction of the Stop Tax Haven Abuse Act. The legislation will be introduced Thursday by Senator Carl Levin (D-MI) and cosponsors **Senators Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI)**, Mark Begich (D-AK) and Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH). The bill would close the most egregious corporate tax loopholes used by multinationals to shield offshore profits from taxation and raise at least \$200 billion over 10 years.



“Corporations need to pay their fair share of taxes. There is no better way to do that than by closing offshore corporate tax loopholes that lose about \$100 billion in revenue each year and result in the shipping of many jobs overseas,” said Frank Clemente, Campaign Manager of Americans for Tax Fairness. “On behalf of our coalition, I would like to thank Senator Levin for his leadership on this issue. We stand strongly behind this legislation and we are prepared to engage the collective power of our 325 national and state member organizations to support his efforts.”

The **Levin-Whitehouse-Begich-Shaheen** bill would primarily close tax loopholes in four areas – eliminating incentives for sending jobs and operations offshore, stopping manipulation of the foreign tax credit, limiting incentives to moving intellectual property and related marketing rights to other countries, and repealing the “check the box” rule, which allows corporations to make foreign subsidiaries invisible for tax purposes. Some of the largest and most profitable American corporations use these loopholes aggressively, turning their tax and legal departments into profit centers, saving billions in taxes and gaining a substantial advantage over competitors. Some extremely profitable companies, such as General Electric, have in some years been able to avoid federal corporate income taxes altogether.

There is growing bipartisan agreement that a number of corporate tax loopholes should be closed in order to level the playing field, especially those that give significant advantages to the largest multinational corporations over medium or small businesses. Members of the ATF coalition and many others also believe that collecting lost revenue is necessary to meet our long-term fiscal challenges, reverse and prevent further cuts to critical benefits and services, and make needed investments to strengthen our economy and create jobs, not be used for more tax cuts.

Much of the debate over corporate taxes to date has focused on the top federal corporate income tax rate, which is 35 percent. However, the largest and most profitable corporations only paid an effective tax rate of 12.6 percent in 2010, according to a report by the U.S. Government Accountability Office. The difference between the top rate and the effective rate is largely due to numerous tax breaks and widespread use of tax avoidance strategies, many of which would be prevented by the Levin bill. The legislation introduced Thursday helps shift the debate to the need to close corporate tax loopholes to raise substantial sums, rather than to supporting revenue-neutral tax reform.

ATF is a diverse coalition of more than 325 national and state organizations that collectively represent tens of millions of members. The organization was formed on the belief that the country needs comprehensive, progressive tax reform that results in greater revenue to meet our growing needs. ATF is playing a central role in Washington and in the states on federal tax-reform issues.

The Alliance for Retired Americans, AFL-CIO, AFSCME, American Federation of Teachers, National Education Association are part of the 325 organizations.

SOCIAL SAFETY NET PROGRAMS KEPT TENS OF MILLIONS OUT OF POVERTY

Alan Pyke, ThinkProgress



The official poverty rate was essentially unchanged at 15.1 percent in 2012, and alternative measures show that safety net programs like food stamps, unemployment insurance, Social Security, and tax credits for the working poor keep tens of millions of Americans out of poverty each year, the Census Bureau reported Tuesday...[Read more](#)

HOW SOCIAL SECURITY SCREWS PEOPLE WITH PHYSICALLY ARDUOUS JOBS

Matthew Yglesias, Slate

Many people are retiring when they're 62 or 63 even though the lifetime financial benefits to delaying another year or two or three could be quite large. This dynamic builds a number of subtle inegalitarian features into the system. Basically if you have a physically arduous job that's hard to keep doing into your 60s, you end up paying a financial penalty on top of the physical costs...[Read More](#)



BABY BOOMERS DEPEND ON SOCIAL SECURITY FOR "COMFORTABLE" RETIREMENT, SURVEY SAYS

Business Wire



The majority of retired Baby Boomers (65%) currently rely on Social Security benefits, and nearly one-third (32%) say they would not be able to live comfortably in retirement without them, according to an Investor Index Survey released by TD Ameritrade Holding Corporation....[Read More](#)

BUDGET OFFICE WARNS THAT DEFICITS WILL RISE AGAIN BECAUSE CUTS ARE MISDIRECTED

Jackie Calmes, New York Times

As the White House and Congress careen toward another fiscal showdown, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office warned on Tuesday that President Obama and lawmakers have been cutting the wrong kind of federal spending as they try to avoid the unsustainable buildup of debt that is projected in the coming decades...[Read More](#)



STUDY: STATE'S POOR HEALTH CARE AFFECTS ALL INCOME LEVELS

Kelly Kennedy, USA TODAY



High-income people who live in states that generally do poorly in health care are worse off than low-income people in states with high health care scores, according to a Commonwealth Fund study released today.

"In the United States, income is not a guarantee of good healthcare or good health," said David Blumenthal, president of The Commonwealth Fund, a private foundation that works to increase access to health care. "Where you live plays a very big part in your experience...[Read More](#)

MANY CANCER PATIENTS OVERTREATED IN FINAL DAYS

Stacy Burling, Philadelphia Inquirer/Kaiser Health News



While most older people say they don't want aggressive care at the end of life, many get it anyway. Care in the last month of life for Medicare patients with advanced cancer typically is even more aggressive in the Philadelphia area than in the nation as a whole, concludes a report from the Dartmouth Atlas of Health Care, which studies regional differences in care...[Read More](#)

TEST OF ALZHEIMER'S DRUG GETS LARGE FEDERAL GRANT

Pam Belluck, New York Times

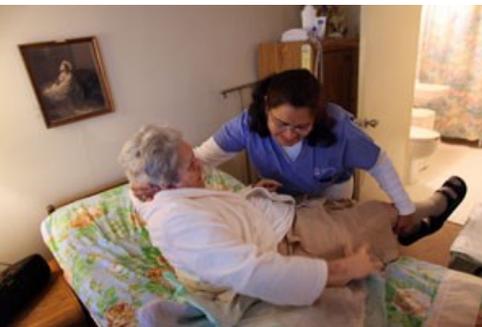
In the most significant sign yet of a broad shift in the focus of Alzheimer's research from treating to preventing the disease, the federal government announced on Wednesday its largest grant so far to test an Alzheimer's drug on healthy people at greatest risk for the most common form of the disease.

The \$33.2 million grant, and several other prevention studies awarded federal money in the last year, follow years of unsuccessful trials of treatments on people who already have dementia. Those failures have led to the realization that these drugs appear to be ineffective by the time memory and thinking problems have taken hold. At the same time, scientific advances have allowed researchers to identify people at risk for Alzheimer's long before symptoms emerge...[Read More](#)



LONG-TERM CARE PANEL RELEASES RECOMMENDATIONS BUT FAILS TO OFFER PLAN TO HELP PAY FOR SERVICES

Susan Jaffe, Kaiser Health News



A commission created by Congress to address the country's surging need for long-term health care released recommendations Friday but did not reach a consensus on how to pay for these often expensive services.

The proposals were part of a report that received bipartisan support from nine of the 15 commissioners, five Republicans and four Democrats. It also was rejected by a bipartisan minority, five Democrats and a Republican.

The group's full report is expected to be released next week.

Among its many proposals, the panel calls for supporting criminal background checks for long-term care workers, ensuring that family caregivers are included in care planning, using more technology to share information; revising scope of

practice rules to allow nurses and others to provide medical services and improving working conditions and opportunities for direct care workers...[Read More](#)

WHEN TO CONSIDER IN-HOME CARE

Avery Forman, Wall Street Journal

There are things to consider when looking into care at home—including the number of limitations a person is struggling with, whether they have supports in the community and whether the home itself is suitable. New advances in home care are allowing more people to remain in their homes because of telehealth and apps designed to keep track of an elder person's medication compliance and comings and goings, says Steve Landers, chief executive of VNA Health Group, which provides home-health services...[Read More](#)

